

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9573

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 13324

DEPT. PASS AS APPROPRIATE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, XF, EC

SUBJECT: FURTHER FRENCH REACTION TO ISRAELI-SYRIAN
DISENGAGEMENT ACCORD AND COMMENT ON MIDDLE EAST.

REF: (A) PARIS 13160; (B) PARIS 13163

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH DCM MAY 30 (REF A), QUAI'S DIRECTOR FOR NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA DE COMMINES SAID HE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ANY DETAILS WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO THE ACCORD, IN PARTICULAR THE HARD POINTS AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME. HE ALSO ASKED WHAT THE SOVIET ROLE HAD BEEN.

2. DCM INDICATED THAT EMBASSY UNINFORMED ABOUT THE DETAILS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND OFFERED HIS PERSONAL GUESS THAT GROMYKO HAD MADE NO SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO ACHIEVING THE ACCORD. DE COMMINES EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH DCM'S SPECULATION THAT BY HAVING GROMYKO IN DAMASCUS JUST BEFORE THE ACCORD WAS REACHED, THE SYRIANS HOPED TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITION AND TO ENSURE SOVIET SUPPORT DURING LATER STAGES OF THE EFFORT TO REACH A FINAL SETTLEMENT.

3. IN SUBSEQUENT TALK WITH EMBOFF MAY 31, QUAI'S ISRAEL, JORDAN OFFICER BELLEISSUE ECHOED DE COMMINES PRAISE FOR
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SECRETARY'S SKILL IN ACHIEVING AN ACCORD. HE SAID THAT

HE HAD BEEN SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE CHANCES FOR BRINGING THE SYRIANS AROUND, A MUCH HARDER TASK THAN THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT, AND THAT THE LATEST STEP WAS THEREFORE MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANT, ESPECIALLY FOR ITS POTENTIAL EFFECT ON THE PALESTINIANS.

4. AS FOR THE FUTURE, BELLEISSUE ONCE AGAIN UNDERLINED THE FRENCH VIEW THAT ONLY A SETTLEMENT OF THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION CAN BRING STABILITY TO THE AREA. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE THOUGHT THE MEETING IN CAIRO THIS WEEKEND OF THE PALESTINIAN LEADERS BEARS CLOSE WATCHING. THE ULTIMATE STUMBLING BLOCK, HE OPINED, WOULD BE JERUSALEM, A PROBLEM ABOUT WHICH ISRAEL SEEMED INFLEXIBLE BUT THE RESOLUTION OF WHICH IS ESSENTIAL FOR ANY PERMANENT SETTLEMENT.

5. COMMENTING ON THE PROBABLE EFFECT OF A NEW PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER ON FRENCH MIDDLE EASTERN POLICY, BELLEISSUE SAID THERE MIGHT WELL BE A CHANGE IN TONE BUT NO SIGNIFICANT ALTERATION IN SUBSTANCE. HE CONFIRMED IN GENERAL TERMS THE OUTLINES OF EC PLANNING FOR INITIATING DIALOGUE WITH THE ARAB STATES AS REPORTED BY POSTS IN OTHER EC CAPITALS. WITH A WRY SMILE, HE ADDED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE GERMANS, AS AUTHORIZED BY THE NINE, HAD ALREADY DESCRIBED EC PLANS TO US IN DETAIL, INCLUDING THE E.C. INTENTION TO CONSULT WITH THE U.S. AS THE DIALOGUE PROCEEDS.

IRWIN

NOTE BY OC/T: DISSEMINATION PER S/S-O, MR. EALUM, 5/31/74.

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